Philosophical Transactions

Please note: Due to an error in the print volume, the page numbering in this article may contain either page numbering skips, or page numbering repetitions, or both. However, the article content is presented in its entirety and in correct reading order.

Please click on "Next Page" (at the top of the screen) to begin viewing the article.

IV. *Part of a Letter from the Reverend Mr* Abraham de la Pryme, *F. R. S. to the Publiſher, concerning a Spout obſerved by him in* Yorkſhire.

Thorn, July 29. 1702.

HAving obſerved in the Tranſactions for *January* laſt, Mr *Stewart*'s Ingenious Account of ſome Spouts that he beheld in the *Mediterranean* Sea; it brought into my mind the memory of one that I ſaw, and was very near in this Country ſome years ago, which having then committed to Paper, I ſhall now preſent you with the relation of.

On the 15th of *Aug.* 1687. about two in the afternoon, appeared a Spout in the Air, in the Pariſh of *Hatfield*; upon the noiſe of which I immediately ran to the view thereof, and found it about a mile off, coming directly to the place where I was; upon which I took my Proſpective Glaſſes, and made the beſt and niceſt Obſervations thereon that I could.

The Seaſon was very dry, the Weather extreme hot, and the Air very Cloudy, the Wind aloft and pretty ſtrong; and (that which is moſt obſervable and moſt material) blowing out of ſeveral quarters at the ſame time, and filling the Air hereabouts with mighty thick and black Clouds, layer upon layer; the Wind thus blowing ſoon created a great *Vortex*, Giration, and Whirling amongſt the Clouds, the Center of which ever now and then dropt down in the ſhape of a thick long Black Pipe, commonly call'd a Spout; in which I could plainly and moſt diſtinctly behold a Motion, like that of a Screw, continually drawing upwards, and Screwing up (as it were) whatever it touched. In its progreſs it moved ſlowly over a Hedge Row and Grove of young

young Trees, which it made bend like Haſel Wands, in a Circular Motion; then going forward to a great Barn, it did in a minute twitch off all the Thatch, and fill the whole Air therewith. Coming to a very great Oak Tree, it made it bend like the aforegoing, and broke one of the greateſt and ſtrongeſt Branches thereof, that would not yield to its fury, and twiſting it about, flung it a very conſiderable diſtance off. Then coming to the place where I ſtood, even within 300 yards of me, I beheld with great ſatisfaction its odd Phœnomenon, and found that it proceeded from nothing at all but a Giration of the Clouds, by contrary Winds meeting in a Point or Center, and then and there where the Greateſt Condenſation and Gravitation was, falling down into a Pipe or Great Tube (ſomewhat like the *Cochlea Archimedis*) and that in its Working or Whirling Motion either ſucks up Water, or Deſtroys Ships, *&c.* having travell'd about a quarter of a mile farther, it then Diſſolved by the Prevalency of the Wind that came out of the Eaſt.